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SENSITIVE
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ELAB

SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA ANNUAL REPORT ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

REF: A. STATE 2731

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11. (SBU) SUMMARY

1A. Slovakia is steadily moving forward in its fight against TIP. In addition to allocating a substantial increase in anti-TIP funding (by multiplying it fourfold, from USD 91,000 to USD 364,000) the Government of Slovakia (GOS) has increased both transparency and stakeholder collaboration in its anti-TIP activities. Improved dialogue between the GOS and NGOs has facilitated the drafting process of the GOS's 2008-2010 National Program for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons ("National Program"). Transparency in its financial grant mechanisms has given more NGOs the opportunity to submit project proposals. Internationally, the GOS continues to commit itself to anti-TIP protocols. In 2007 and 2008, it ratified and then put into effect the Council of Europe's (COE) 2005 Convention against Human Trafficking. It was one of only 14 COE members to do so.

According to International Organizations (IOs) interviewed for this report, the improvement in the GOS approach is thanks in part to a new attitude of openness and cooperation, mostly on the part of the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) and particularly from the office of the TIP National Coordinator, which has shown an increased willingness to tap into the expertise of the IOs and fight for increased TIP funding.

A continued focus on training those on the front lines of the fight against TIP, e.g., police, and on improving communication among government agencies will further strengthen Slovakia's ability to address TIP.

Overall, the 2007-2008 reporting period was generally positive, and the view communicated to post by stakeholders was one of cautious optimism.

1B. Answers below are keyed to section and paragraph numbers in reftel. Embassy Bratislava point of contact is:

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1C. Total time to complete TIP report:

FSNs: 30
FS04: 60
FS02: 3
FS01: 1

12. (SBU) OVERVIEW

1A. A COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AND TRANSIT

Slovakia is considered a transit and a source country for trafficking in persons. The International Office for Migration (IOM) states that due to the small number of known victims who are third country nationals or those trafficked only within Slovak borders, the country cannot be classified as a destination country, though IOM and the government both acknowledge that some women may be forced to work briefly in Slovakia while in transit to their final destinations in Western Europe.

The MOI, local police, NGOs and the IOM are the best sources of information regarding the number and kinds of TIP victims. Though the numbers vary from source to source, they are generally reliable. The IOM - which believes that TIP is generally an under-reported crime - estimates between 150 to 200 individuals, mostly women in their late teens and 20s, are trafficked per year. During the reporting period, the IOM dealt with 30 repatriated victims of trafficking and no foreign victims. The NGO Dotyk dealt with a total of four victims in their government-funded victim-assistance pilot program (only one of four was new: the other three were carried over from last year's report). Outside of the pilot program, Dotyk assisted an additional 13 victims. Police were approached by only 15 victims (all women) of whom at least three were minors. Last year, the IOM dealt with 40 victims and police reported 31.

1B. GENERAL OVERVIEW

In July 2007, the MOI named a new TIP National Coordinator, State
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Secretary Vladimir Cecot, one of the two MOI State Secretaries.

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Cecot is a lawyer by profession, and previously chaired the Criminal Law department at the prestigious Comenius University in Bratislava. [Note: Cecot replaced State Secretary Jozef Bucek, who stepped down at National Coordinator in 2007 to focus on Slovakia's entry into the EU Schengen Zone. End note] The MOI-created TIP Expert Group that Cecot oversees (which is comprised of high-level officials) met in November 2007 with all stakeholders and met independently again in February 2008 to approve the draft National Program for 2008-2010.

Slovakia's updated draft National Program for 2008-2010 is currently in the approval process. The TIP Expert Group approved the draft on February 18, 2008, and it now awaits approval by the Minister of the Interior and then the Cabinet as a whole (the deadline for which is April 30, 2008.) The draft contains a review of the 2007 Program, as well as new strategies for law enforcement, victim assistance and support, and prevention. Further, it lists responsible agencies and details tasks for the implementation of the Program.

The MOI improved its drafting process by opening it up to comments from NGOs, something it previously had not done. Post applauds MOI's initiative in reaching out to stakeholders.

A "TIP Roundtable" seminar, held in November 2007, was comprised of Slovak government officials from the Expert Group, representatives from other government agencies, the OSCE Special Envoy and Coordinator for TIP, the EU Parliament, NGOs, and charities. The DCM from Embassy Bratislava also attended. It was at that event that TIP Coordinator Cecot expressed GOS desire to do what is necessary to move Slovakia into Tier One. According to some participants, the informal atmosphere of the seminar made it easier for stakeholders to share their experiences and views. Post believes that the "Roundtable" is a good indicator of forward movement and increased

cooperation between the public and private sectors.

The MOI has completed last year's pilot program for victim support (which established victim services and shelters). MOI has already budgeted for the continuation of this program in 2008 and has chosen 5 successful NGO candidates. One of the NGOs chosen is the Cultural Association of Roma in Slovakia, which will focus on prevention in Roma communities.

The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) completed its evaluation of the GOS' Program for Protection and Assistance to Victims of TIP (which is a portion of the National Program) in late 2007, and provided recommendations on how the government can improve in these areas. These recommendations focused on better communication between government bodies and more outreach to NGOs. The GOS has incorporated these suggestions into its draft updated Program for 2008-2010. In general, the UNODC report maintained that the formal institutional framework for victim assistance and protection is sufficient, and that further cooperation and coordination between stakeholders will help GOS reach its anti-TIP goals.

According to the Police Anti-TIP unit and NGOs, most of the victims trafficked through Slovakia continue to come from the former Soviet Republics (especially Moldova and Ukraine), Bulgaria, the Baltics, the Balkans and China, and are trafficked to the Czech Republic, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Italy, Austria, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Spain, Croatia, and Slovenia. Slovak victims usually come from economically depressed regions of Slovakia with high levels of unemployment. Often, these women come from the Roma minority population.

Victims who have been returned to Slovakia are usually young females in their late teens or early 20s. Many report being trafficked after accepting offers from relatives, acquaintances, or unlicensed agencies to arrange for work abroad. Some consciously enter into prostitution only to become trafficked at a later date. Because they are willing participants (at first) the victims tend to be transported to their destination country on public transportation with no resistance.

According to police, as well as the testimony of some victims and offenders, trafficking in Slovakia is usually an organized criminal activity. Small-scale Slovak perpetrators feed victims into larger international syndicates at their destinations. Organized trafficking groups consist of Germans, Czechs, Russians, Ukrainians, Albanians, Italians, Macedonians, Poles, or Slovenes.

Male and female Slovak traffickers usually have prior knowledge and direct experience in the sex industry in Western Europe. They typically utilize employment or hostess agency schemes, but also rely on personal connections with women.

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Roma victims, in particular, are likely to know their traffickers. Some Roma women enter into prostitution knowingly, fleeing the conditions of an abusive home or poor living conditions in a Roma settlement (or shantytown), and become victims of trafficking in the destination country.

Roma activists suggest an increase in the trafficking of Roma children for begging. According to a Roma NGO, the practice is highly organized. Traffickers from within the Roma community send children (either by themselves or with their mothers or other women) by bus to Austria, Italy and Germany to work the streets. Traffickers then withhold the victims' identity papers in order to keep them from escaping.

I.C. ANTI-TIP GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The MOI State Secretary is the current National Coordinator for anti-TIP activities and presides over the Expert Group. The Director of the MOI's Department of Security Strategies is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the Expert Group and oversees the implementation of the National Program. This includes drafting the update of the National Program, organizing inter-agency cooperation,

tracking TIP statistics, distributing funds for anti-TIP projects, and working with NGOs to develop those projects. In addition to the Expert Group, some prevention activities are coordinated by the working group established within the Government Council for Crime Prevention. Other ministries that advise MOI on TIP include the Ministries of Justice, Education, Finance, Health, Labor and Social Affairs, and Foreign Affairs, as well as the General Prosecutor's Office.

Falling under the Police Anti-Organized Crime Bureau, the Police Anti-Trafficking Unit, which has 10 dedicated officers, coordinates most activity regarding trafficking both within Slovakia and with INTERPOL; members of the unit have traveled overseas to participate in seminars and training. The unit documents and investigates crimes, monitors known places of prostitution, investigates suspicious travel or employment schemes, and contributes to public awareness by giving presentations at conferences and conducting training.

The Border and Alien police are responsible for monitoring border crossings for evidence of trafficking, with the customs directorate and the MFA also playing a role.

The Equal Opportunity Office at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOL) supports NGO activity through grants, manages the implementation of international protocols regarding worker's rights, and works to reduce violence against women.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) coordinates with IOM to bring TIP awareness discussions into high school classrooms. Though the MOE is still working to officially implement a TIP curriculum in schools, in practice TIP education is on-going.

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is responsible for strengthening safeguards for victim protection.

The General Prosecutor is responsible for the prosecution of traffickers.

1D. GOVERNMENT LIMITATIONS

The draft National Program will increase the National Coordinator's 2008 budget to fight trafficking to USD 364,000. This is four times the amount allocated during the last reporting period, when funding levels reached only USD 91,000. However, money for victim assistance programs is only authorized one year at a time. Anti-TIP police remain funded at past levels, supporting 10 officers at the national police headquarters. Overall, government corruption is not a significant problem for trafficking in persons.

1E. GOVERNMENT SELF-MONITORING

The MOI provides internal assessments and baseline information regarding the nature of trafficking in Slovakia. The updated draft of the National Program for 2008-2010 contains an assessment of the Program's performance during the 2007 reporting period. Once the report is released, the results will be available for public access on the MOI website. Further, the UNODC and the MOI are conducting a joint research project to evaluate how efficient the GOS' TIP programs have been. It will also study trends in trafficking by collecting data on the profiles of both victims and perpetrators, as well as the details of the trafficking operations. The results of the study are expected in April 2008.

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13. (SBU) INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF TRAFFICKERS

1A. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

TIP is defined and criminalized through Section 179 in the Criminal Code. Trafficking in children is a separate crime, covered by

sections 180 and 181. Other related legislation includes: Section 367 on Procurement (Pimping), Section 208 on torture of a close person or person in one's charge, Section 371 on endangering morality. The law states explicitly the extra-territorial nature of this crime and acknowledge that the crime also entails fraudulent means, violence, threat, or other forms of coercion to elicit agreement from a victim older than 18 years (for section 179) for the crime of trafficking. These laws are being used in trafficking cases and adequately cover the full scope of trafficking.

Slovak law allows a renewable 40-day "tolerated stay" status for foreign victims of serious crimes, including trafficking in persons.

On January 30, 2007, Slovakia signed the Council of Europe's (COE) Convention of 2005 on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. It ratified the document on March 27, 2007. The Convention was subsequently entered into force on February 1, 2008. It is a comprehensive treaty, focusing mainly on the protection of trafficking victims and safeguarding their rights. It also aims to prevent trafficking and to prosecute traffickers. The Convention applies to all forms of trafficking, whether national or international, and whether related to organized crime. It applies to men, women and children equally, whatever the form of exploitation (labor or sex acts). The Convention provides a mechanism to guarantee each signatory's compliance with its provisions. Significantly, Slovakia is one of only 14 COE countries that have ratified this Convention.

In the past several years, Parliament has amended and ratified other relevant trafficking legislation to conform to EU directives and UN requirements, such as the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. In 2006, Parliament passed a law on victim assistance requiring police to provide victims of any crime information on organizations that can help them.

The country participates in all EU structures and working groups in the field of justice and home affairs that seek to monitor and control trafficking in persons. According to UNHCR, Slovakia incorporated higher standards into its laws than the EU minimum requirements for protection of refugees and asylum seekers.

II.B. PENALTIES FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION TRAFFICKING

The GOS increased the minimum sentences for trafficking in 2006. The provision on trafficking (both for the purpose of sexual and labor exploitation) states that any person, who entices, enlists, transfers or receives another person to or from abroad with the intention to engage such person in sexual intercourse or exploitation is liable to a term of imprisonment of four to ten years. A four to 10 year sentence is also applicable to a person who exploits another person through forced labor, involuntary servitude, slavery, or other similar forms of exploitation. The penalty increases to a 7 to 12 year prison term if a) the perpetrator gains considerable profit, b) the offense is committed against a protected person, c) the offense is committed with a special motive, or d) the offense is committed in conjunction with another grave illegal activity, such as organized crime. The penalty increases to 12 to 20 years if a) the perpetrator gains extensive profit, b) the offender causes serious bodily harm or death or other extraordinarily serious effect, or c) the offense is committed as a member of a dangerous group. Lastly, a term of 20 to 25 years can be applied if the perpetrator gains large scale profit or causes serious bodily harm to or the death of multiple persons.

The Ministry of Justice reported that 6 out of the 7 sex traffickers convicted in 2007 received suspended sentences. Only one received jail time.

II.C. PENALTIES FOR LABOR TRAFFICKING

The penalty for trafficking for labor exploitation is the same as for trafficking for sexual exploitation.

There were no convictions of labor traffickers during the reporting period. The first and only case was reported in mid-February 2008, when a group of 8 Vietnamese nationals were found working in a

Bratislava-area cigarette factory. The Vietnamese were turned over to the Border and Alien police. The investigation into the case has just begun, and few details are yet available. Post will continue to monitor the case.

D. PENALTIES FOR RAPE

The range of sentencing for rape is five to 10 years' imprisonment and could be increased to 7 to 15 years depending on the age of the victim or whether violence was used. The sentence may be further increased to 15 to 20 years if the act results in serious bodily harm, and 20 to 25 years if the perpetrator causes the death of the victim or the crime is committed in a crisis situation. The penalties for rape are on par with penalties for trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation.

E. PROSTITUTION

Prostitution is neither illegal nor legal in Slovakia, nor is it regulated. The Criminal Code prohibits pimping activities, including coercing or taking advantage of or gaining from the prostitution of others. Sentences range from one to 15 years depending on the age of the victim, method in which the crime was committed, whether organized crime was involved, and whether the crime resulted in bodily harm or death. If the offense involves children under the age of 15 or between 15 and 18, the Criminal Code adds three to 10 and seven to 12 years to the sentences respectively. Because prostitution is not regulated, there is no minimum age at which a person may legally choose to be a prostitute.

However, the minimum age of consensual sex is 15. Sex with a minor aged 14 or younger is considered statutory rape regardless of the circumstances. Local governments can prohibit the offer of sexual services in public places and offenders can be fined.

F. INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF TRAFFICKERS

The government actively investigates cases of trafficking through the specialized anti-trafficking unit at Police Headquarters in Bratislava. The anti-TIP unit first conducts a preliminary investigation, then assists local police officials directly involved with the case, or assists investigators from the Bureau for Organized Crime if the case involves organized crime or has international implications. The police conduct inspections of suspected places of prostitution, and monitor internet sites.

At the regional level, TIP is investigated by four specialized officers (two in the city of Zilina, one in the city of Trnava, and one in the city of Kosice) who have experience in related crimes, such as pimping, rape and other sexual violence.

Slovakia criminally prosecutes labor recruiters who use false or deceptive offers of employment, or who confiscate employee's passports. Articles 179, 181-184 and Article 241 of the anti-TIP law are used to prosecute such cases.

The Slovak criminal code allows for the possibility of parole after an inmate serves two-thirds of his or her sentence. In the case of a serious crime (with a sentence of more than 8 years) courts can grant parole only after three-fourths of the sentence is served. In the case of a life sentence, the court can ban parole completely, or grant it after 25 years served.

According to official statistics, police investigated 13 cases of trafficking during the reporting period. Perpetrators were identified in four cases. Of these, 16 individuals were brought to trial, resulting in 7 convictions. According to police, all of these cases concerned sex trafficking. Two cases involved victims who were minors.

G. TRAINING

The 10 officers in the Police Anti-trafficking unit located in Bratislava were fully trained in TIP. In addition to the regional officers in Zilina, Trnava, and Kosice, most police districts have

one officer who receives at least some additional instruction and, among his/her other duties, serves as a point of contact with the Anti-trafficking unit. For the rest of the police corps, trafficking in persons is addressed in educational modules concerning victim protection and human rights at the police academy.

In 2007, the MOI published a training manual aimed at police officers. The manual defined TIP, explained how to identify victims, and how to refer those victims to appropriate assistance programs. It also listed extensive contact information that police can utilize, including names and phone numbers for the MOI, Anti-TIP police in Bratislava, and several NGOs.

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HOWEVER, MORE TRAINING IS NECESSARY FOR BORDER POLICE, CUSTOMS OFFICIALS, AND STAFF AND SOCIAL WORKERS AT THE REFUGEE CAMPS AND ASYLUM RECEPTION FACILITIES. THOUGH OFFICERS HAVE RECEIVED SOME TRAINING, SOME IOS ARE CONCERNED THAT POLICE, ESPECIALLY BORDER POLICE, DO NOT DEVOTE SUFFICIENT EFFORT TO TIP DETECTION AND PREVENTION. ACCORDING TO IOS INTERVIEWED FOR THIS REPORT, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS "AT THE TOP" ARE GENUINELY WORKING TO ELIMINATE TIP, BUT THE CONCEPT HAS NOT SUFFICIENTLY TRICKLED DOWN TO THE AVERAGE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER WHO DEALS WITH THE ISSUE ON A DAILY BASIS.

IH. INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

THE GOS COOPERATES WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS IN THE INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF TRAFFICKING CASES. THE POLICE ANTI-TRAFFICKING UNIT EXPLAINED THAT MOST TRAFFICKING CASES REQUIRE AN INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATION. SLOVAK EMBASSIES HAVE A POLICE ATTACHE WHO ASSISTS WITH JOINT INVESTIGATIONS. MANY INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS OCCUR IN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERPOL AND EUROPOL. THE SPECIALIZED TRAFFICKING UNIT NOTES THAT THE LACK OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ABILITY AMONG SLOVAK POLICE SOMETIMES LIMITS INVESTIGATIONS.

IN FEBRUARY, 2008 MOI STATE SECRETARY CECOT ATTENDED THE UNODC TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS CONFERENCE IN VIENNA TO PRESENT AN UPDATE ON WHAT SLOVAKIA IS DOING TO COMBAT TIP, AND TO OFFER BRATISLAVA AS THE SEAT OF A NEW INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION CENTER FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

II. EXTRADITION

BASED ON THE LAW ON CRIMINAL COURT PROCEDURES, SLOVAKIA CAN EXTRADITE PERSONS FOR ANY CRIME WITH A CORRESPONDING SENTENCE LONGER THAN ONE YEAR, EXCEPT A CRIME POLITICAL IN NATURE. SLOVAK CITIZENS CAN ONLY BE EXTRADITED WHEN GOVERNED BY A TREATY SIGNED BY SLOVAKIA. THE UN CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME ALLOWS FOR SLOVAKIA TO EXTRADITE TRAFFICKERS. SLOVAKIA HAS A BILATERAL EXTRADITION AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. WHICH ALLOWS FOR THE EXTRADITION OF NON-SLOVAKS TO THE UNITED STATES. DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD, SLOVAKIA EXTRADITED ONE CITIZEN TO AUSTRIA TO FACE TIP CHARGES.

IJ. GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN TRAFFICKING

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF GOVERNMENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN OR TOLERANCE OF TRAFFICKING. DESPITE GOVERNMENTAL EFFORTS TO COMBAT PETTY CORRUPTION ON THE BORDERS AND AMONG POLICE, THE PROBLEM STILL EXISTS. HOWEVER, THE CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES OF THESE INDIVIDUALS DO NOT REFLECT INSTITUTIONAL ACCEPTANCE ON A LOCAL OR NATIONAL LEVEL.

IK. STEPS TO END GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN TRAFFICKING

ACCORDING TO POLICE SOURCES, THERE WERE NO CASES OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN TRAFFICKING.

IL. INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF NATIONALS DEPLOYED ABROAD

DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD, SLOVAKIA DID NOT REPORT ANY CASES OF TRAFFICKING INVOLVING NATIONALS DEPLOYED ABROAD.

IM. CHILD SEX TOURISM

SLOVAKIA IS NOT IDENTIFIED AS A DESTINATION FOR CHILD SEX TOURISM. THE TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN LAW, LIKE THE TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS LAW, REFLECTS EXTRATERRITORIALITY.

14. (SBU) PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS

1A. VICTIM ASSISTANCE

SLOVAK LAW PROVIDES FOR A RENEWABLE 40-DAY "TOLERATED STAY" FOR FOREIGN VICTIMS OF SERIOUS CRIMES, INCLUDING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

THIS STATUS GIVES THE VICTIM THE RIGHT TO WORK. THERE ARE SOME CONCERNS THAT THE LAW IS NOT AS THOROUGH AS IT SHOULD BE TO PROVIDE LONG-TERM PROTECTION TO VICTIMS. FOR EXAMPLE, POLICE HAVE THE RIGHT TO DECLINE TO RENEW THE TOLERATED STAY IF THE VICTIM DECIDES NOT TO COOPERATE WITH THE LAW ENFORCEMENT INVESTIGATION. WITHOUT THE RENEWED STAY, IT APPEARS THAT THE LAW WOULD LEAVE THE VICTIM WITHOUT LEGAL STATUS IN SLOVAKIA, THEREBY SUBJECT TO DEPORTATION. HOWEVER, A FOREIGN VICTIM HAS THE RIGHT TO APPLY FOR ASYLUM AND THEREBY RECEIVE "SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION" STATUS. IN ADDITION TO THE "TOLERATED STAY" LAW, SLOVAK AUTHORITIES ARE REQUIRED TO POSTPONE DEPORTATION OF ANY THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONAL WHO SEEKS TO ENTER A

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witness protection program or who claims asylum, thus providing temporary residency status.

The IOM runs a specialized victims' assistance program exclusively for repatriated Slovaks. According to IOM, the situation in Slovakia has improved dramatically in recent years. The focus on increased victims support - including legal, psychological, medical, and social assistance - by the competent government Ministries has increased the country's capacity to help victims and encouraged returning victims to seek assistance. The IOM told post that cooperation with the MOI is continually improving, and it hopes to eventually hand over its operations to local NGOs, which will then operate with GOS funding.

1B. VICTIM CARE FACILITIES

Access to legal, medical, and psychological services for victims (both foreign and domestic) were the cornerstone of Slovakia's first National Program.

During the reporting period, NGO's assisted approximately 47 trafficking victims (a decrease from 60 reported last year). NGO Dotyk reported assisting four victims (using MOI funding), and the IOM reported 30 victims. The remaining 13 victims received assistance from Dotyk outside of the MOI pilot program.

The government provides dedicated shelters through its NGO programs. The MOI signed three cooperative agreements with NGOs in February 2007, providing funding levels of USD 68,000. Through this program, the NGO Dotyk provided assistance to four victims, including shelter and health services.

1C. FUNDING FOR NGOS

In December 2007, the MOI made public a request for proposals for anti-TIP victim assistance projects for 2008. By January 2008, MOI had received 7 proposals, and in February 2008 it made awards to five NGOs (IOM, Dotyk, Slovak Catholic Charity, Prima and the Cultural Association of Roma in Slovakia). For 2008, the funding of NGOs is expected to be approximately USD 227,000.

The December 2007 call for proposals highlights one area in which the GOS has drastically improved. The request was published on MOI's website, a move welcomed by NGOs and international observers. In contrast, during the previous reporting period, MOI's request for proposals was facilitated mainly by representatives from MOI inviting NGOs of their choosing to submit bids. Post applauds the new, public approach by MOI in inviting proposals. Post believe

this added transparency is beneficial to all stakeholders.

I.D. IDENTIFYING AND REFERRING VICTIMS

During the reporting period, police identified and referred 15 TIP victims to NGOs, based on a law requiring authorities to provide information about organizations offering support services to potential victims. The Anti-Trafficking Unit screens and refers victims who are actively participating in the investigation process or witness protection.

I.E. SCREENING FOR TRAFFICKED VICTIMS AMONG LEGAL SEX WORKERS

Prostitution is neither legal nor illegal in Slovakia, and therefore is not regulated.

I.F. RIGHTS OF VICTIMS

When an individual is identified as a trafficking victim, the victim's rights are respected and he or she does not face fines or jail sentences. However, it has been reported that unidentified victims have been treated as illegal migrants or prostitutes and have been detained or deported.

I.G. VICTIM ASSISTANCE IN INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF TRAFFICKERS

The government encourages victims to assist in the investigation and prosecuting of trafficking. Further, victims may file civil suits or seek legal action against traffickers. According to the IOM, victims are reluctant to do so because of lengthy trials and the perceived lack of psychological, financial, and legal assistance, though the National Coordinator believes an increased support network will help this perception.

As stated above in Section 4, Para A, victims may take advantage of a 40-day "tolerated stay" law which can be renewed and allows them to work.

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Slovakia has a victims' compensation law (No.215/2006) which allows for a one-time reimbursement for victims of violent crimes. The compensation is provided by the Ministry of Justice.

I.H. PROTECTION FOR VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

The government provides witness protection for victims, based upon a decision by an inter-ministerial committee. NGOs, through their victim assistance grants, provide protection for victims housed in their shelters by the use of a private security firm. Other witness protection measures include recorded testimony or testimony through video connection, which is now mandatory for minors. Another law explicitly states that the victim and perpetrator must be kept separate during the judicial procedure, thus requiring video testimony for most current trafficking cases. Outside of the witness protection program, MOI will fund up to 40 days of care for victims, including any services deemed necessary on an individual basis. According to the MOI, juvenile victims are housed separately from adult victims.

As stated in Section 4, para B, four victims were assisted by government-funded shelter program though the NGO Dotyk, while 43 victims were assisted by non-government-funded programs through Dotyk and the IOM.

I.I. TRAINING FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

During the reporting period, the MOI -- through the Institute for Public Administration -- trained 50 employees of local and state governments in TIP. The training included how to communicate with victims, victim assistance, and general information about TIP. TIP is included in the human rights curriculum at the Police Academy, and during the reporting period, 400 police officers participated in post-graduate TIP training. The Government Council for Crime Prevention conducted TIP training for 90 municipal police from

throughout Slovakia, and the Judicial Academy of the MOJ conducted a seminar for judges and prosecutors on the status and rights of victims in criminal procedures, which also focused on communication with victims. Lastly, the MOL created a plan to educate local governments, central government branches and law enforcement agencies on trafficking and victim assistance. Slovak missions abroad provide travel documents, assistance with money transfers, contacting relatives, arranging services, and travel home. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs helps refer repatriated victims to NGOs for assistance. In some foreign missions, it is permissible to allow temporary accommodation and boarding. Slovak embassies abroad and NGOs cooperate according to the needs exhibited in the host country.

IJ. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

The 40-day MOI-funded assistance program is available to repatriated Slovak citizens as well as foreign victims identified in Slovakia, though during the reporting period, no foreign victims were assisted.

IK. NGO ASSISTANCE

Most NGOs aiding trafficking victims in Slovakia are domestic, although they may have loose cooperation agreements with NGOs abroad. Some of these Slovak NGOs are: the Alliance of Women, Dafne, Dotyk, Prima, Storm, Slovak Catholic Charity, the Cultural Association of Roma in Slovakia, and Victims' Support Slovakia. They provide a wide range of services, from preventive awareness education and identifying victims to arranging for repatriation transport to post-trafficking needs such as medical, mental health, legal, and protective services, and work re-training courses. As stated in Para A, the IOM's program is tailored to assist repatriated victims returning to Slovakia from abroad.

New to this reporting period is the emergence of the Cultural Association of Roma in Slovakia (the "Association") as a MOI-funded player in the fight against TIP. The Association - one of the NGOs awarded grant money for the National Program's 2008 budget - plans to focus on prevention by training Roma social workers on TIP and by supporting TIP prevention activities in Roma communities. It also aims to create a communication and information network that can assist victims in seeking counseling and other services.

NGOs received USD 68,000 in 2007 for anti-TIP programs. For 2008, NGO funding is expected to be approximately USD 227,000.

15. (SBU) PREVENTION

IA. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PROBLEM

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The Slovak government and officials acknowledge trafficking in persons as a problem.

IB. ANTI-TRAFFICKING CAMPAIGNS

Government officials and agencies cooperated with NGOs on anti-trafficking information and education campaigns, targeting potential trafficking victims, but also educating local government workers, teachers, students, community centers, journalists, local police, and the border and alien police. The GOS estimates that through these programs, it reached over 2000 people, including 24 journalists, 90 city and municipal police, and 50 local government officials.

During the process to join the EU Schengen Zone, the MOI published a brochure educating citizens about the risks of trafficking in persons. The 30 page booklet contains 11 pages totally dedicated to anti-TIP information.

Further, the GOS made an effort to identify and help current and potential victims by making available to NGOs brochures about

trafficking. The brochures were written in 9 languages (English, Vietnamese, Russian, Roma, Moldovan, Ukrainian, Polish, Hungarian, and Slovak). The brochure asks specific questions such as, "Are you being forced to work as a prostitute?"; "Are you being forced to work in a household or elsewhere?"; "Do they threaten you with violence?"; "Are they threatening your relatives?"; and, "Did they promise you something different?". The brochures, which were distributed by NGOs in areas where potential victims might be found, contain a hotline telephone number that victims can call.

1C. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND NGOS

Cooperation exists between the government, NGOs, foreign embassies, and other international organizations focused on trafficking through working groups and committees. Police worked with NGOs to receive training on victim identification and assistance, and are required by law to inform victims about how and where to find local support services. NGO leaders stated that police have begun to contact them directly about certain cases and communication continues to improve.

IO's interviewed for this report emphasized the improved atmosphere of cooperation and collaboration between NGOs and the GOS during the reporting period.

1D. MONITORING OF BORDERS

The MOI has continually strengthened border protection mechanisms and improved cross-border cooperation, particularly to gain eligibility for the Schengen Treaty, which it achieved in December 2007. However, Slovakia continues to be a transit country for illegal migrant smuggling to Western Europe.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) believes that the majority of smuggled or trafficked persons that have claimed asylum in Slovakia "disappear" by terminating their asylum cases after being registered at reception and refugee facilities. Slovakia has made progress in deterring illegal migration across its borders: in the past year, the number of new asylum cases decreased by 8 percent, to 2,643 (from 2,849 last year). The number of asylum seekers who terminate the procedure increased to 64 percent (1,693 out of 2,643) versus last year, when 34 percent of seekers terminated their cases. The number of asylum cases granted remains below one percent.

UNHCR notes that better implementation in recent years of Slovakia's Readmission Treaty with Ukraine has reduced the number of migrants in Slovakia. An agreement among the GOS, NGOs and UNHCR allows NGOs to monitor the border situation to ensure that asylum seekers are not sent back to their country of origin. The Ministry of Labor funds a facility for unaccompanied minors. NGO field workers in asylum centers believe that all involved would benefit from TIP awareness training, including themselves, Migration Office staff, and the asylum-seekers.

NGOs, UNHCR and IOM also continue to conduct police training and have cooperated with border police to identify potential trafficking victims among migrant populations. This cooperation with police has increased and is generally positive, according to NGO representatives.

1E. INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

The National Coordinator at the MOI is the point for inter-governmental coordination on trafficking. Within his office,

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he has designated the Director of the Department of Security Strategies to be the working-level point of contact. The National Coordinator convened a high-level Expert Group-which meets at least once a year -- to approve strategies to fight trafficking in persons. The group is designed to have the political weight to enforce measures to combat TIP. The Expert Group includes Directors and State Secretaries from the Ministries of the Interior, Justice, Labor, Finance, Health, and Foreign Affairs, as well as, the office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the General Prosecutor, three NGOs,

and IOM

There was evidence of improved inter-governmental coordination during the drafting of the updated National Action Plan. The MOI reports improved cooperation with the Ministries of Justice, Education, Finance, Health, Labor and Social Affairs and Foreign Affairs. These agencies were asked for their input and criticisms during the drafting of the Plan, which greatly assisted the MOI staff.

I.F. NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

The National Program contains a National Action Plan for the fight against trafficking in persons. The plan calls for the establishment of an increased network of victim support services (specifically regarding legal, psychiatric, medical, and social assistance), the creation of repatriation protocols for Slovak victims identified abroad, and increased media and youth outreach campaigns.

The agency responsible for its development is the MOI, in cooperation with ministries listed in Section 5, para E. Significantly, the MOI - as it conducted its draft process for the 2008-2010 Program (and, subsequently, the National Action Plan) - consulted NGOs for the first time, tapping into their knowledge base and expertise.

I.G. REDUCING DEMAND FOR COMMERCIAL SEX ACTS

The new criteria required by the TIP report were communicated to the GOS during the reporting period. As a result, the draft update of the National Program includes provisions for information campaigns. Specifically, the information campaigns will involve television and print media, educating the public about the criminal consequences of participation in illegal commercial sex acts. The MOI will be responsible for carrying out the campaign. The funding levels in the 2008-2010 National Program for these activities will be USD 22,000.

I.H. MEASURES TO REDUCE PARTICIPATION IN CHILD SEX TOURISM

The Anti-Trafficking Unit of the police did not report any cases of Slovak nationals who had traveled abroad for child sex tourism during the reporting period. Thus, the GOS has not taken any measures to address this issue.

I.I. MEASURES TO ENSURE NATIONALS DEPLOYED ABROAD DO NOT ENGAGE IN TIP-RELATED ACTIVITIES

The draft update of the National Program provides for an anti-TIP information/education program for government personnel stationed abroad. This training will also focus on the consequences of participation in illegal commercial sex acts. The MOI and Ministry of Defense will be responsible for the program, which will be incorporated into police and military personnel basic training. The MOI plans to measure the success of this program by the number of members of police and armed forces trained. Funding allotted for this program will be a portion of the USD 22,000 allotted for the reduction of commercial sex acts (see Para G above).

I.6. (SBU) Best Practices

In November 2007, the MOI organized an anti-TIP seminar, inviting a large group of stakeholders, including the Expert Group, other government agencies, NGOs and charities. The group, informally dubbed the "TIP Roundtable" met for two days to share points of view, criticisms, and ideas for improvement in anti-TIP practices. The seminar participants highly appreciated the opportunity to meet and discuss these issues as a group for the first time. Some participants have told post that the open and informal atmosphere allowed stakeholders to speak frankly about the GOS approach to anti-TIP activities. The MOI, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is planning another seminar for March 31 - April 1, 2008 with a focus on the international face of TIP. Expected to attend are: representatives from the EU Parliament, UNODC, IOM, V-4 countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, and Poland), Austria and Ukraine. This informal "Roundtable" - with its focus on dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders, is a good example of how Slovakia is

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moving ahead in addressing the problem of TIP.

OBSITNIK